

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9220

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 4 MEXICO 6867

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S .N. ASPIRATIONS

REF: MEXICO 6668

DEPT PASS AT DISCRETION TO USUN

EMBASSY REGRETS LENGTH OF THIS MESSAGE BUT CONSIDERS CABLE PREFERABLE TO AIRGRAM BECAUSE OF (1) SIGNIFICANCE OF ISSUE, (2) ECHEVERRIA'S CURRENT EFFORTS TO WIN SUPPORT FOR UN SEC GEN CANDIDACY, (3) NEED FOR PROMPT CONSIDERATION OF ISSUE AND ASSESSMENT OF POLICY OPTIONS AND TACTICS BY DEPARTMENT.

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ IS CLEARLY CAMPAIGNING FOR POST OF SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO SUCCEED SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM IN 1976. CONSIDERATIONS OF DECORUM AND SOME UNCERTAINTY AS TO HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS INHIBIT ECHEVERRIA'S CURRENT EFFORTS TO SEEK SUPPORT FOR HIS CANDIDACY, BUT INDIRECT HINTS OR QUERIES TO U.S. OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS A REPORTED DIRECT APPROACH TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF LUXEMBOURG BY FOREIGN SECRETARY RABAS, LEAVE NO DOUBT AS TO THE TREND OF ECHEVERRIA'S INTENTIONS AND HOPES. HIS CANDIDACY IS ALL BUT AN ACCEPTED FACT IN MEXICO.

2. ECHEVERRIA THE MAN IS SUPREMELY SELF-CONFIDENT, NOT
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INCLINED TO MUCH RELIANCE ON INSTITUTIONAL ADVISORS, A

PRODUCT OF FREQUENTLY CORRUPT AND HYPOCRITICAL MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. HE IS SOMETHING OF A PURITAN, MAINTAINS KILLING PACE OF ACTIVITY (NOT ALWAYS PRODUCTIVE), LOVES THE LIMELIGHT. REACTION TO CRISES NOT PREDICTABLE BUT HAS TENDENCY TO ACT NOW, REFLECT LATER. AS INTERNATIONAL STATESMAN, ECHEVERRIA IS RELATIVELY UNSOPHISTICATED, TENDS TO OVERSIMPLIFY. HE CLEARLY CONSIDERS UNSC AS OBSTACLE TO "DEMOCRATIC" UNGA. HE HAS LONG SOUGHT LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THIRD WORLD, CONSIDERS CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (CERDS) VIRTUAL PANACEA TO WORLD'S ILLS, HAS STRONG BUT NAIVE VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT ECHEVERRIA, IF ELECTED IN SECGEN, WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE EDUCATION IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY, MIGHT SPRING SURPRISING INITIATIVES, WOULD BE HARD TO ADVISE. HE HAS SOME BIAS IN FAVOR OF WESTERN DEMOCRACIES OVER COMMUNIST STATES, CERTAINLY IS BIASED IN FAVOR OF THIRD WORLD AND WOULD CONTINUE TO CHAMPION THIRD WORLD, CERDS, NIEO. REACTION TO CRISES UNPREDICATABLE. LIKE MOST MEXICANS, HE HAS INHERENT WARINESS IF NOT DISTRUST OF U.S. IF ECHEVERRIA ELECTED SECGEN, GOM WOULD CONTINUE MORE ACTIVIST THIRD WORLD POLICY THAN OTHERWISE MIGHT BE THE CASE.

3. IN VIEW OF THE SOMETIMES CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL POSITION AT TIMES OF INTERNATIONAL CRISES, THE EMBASSY WISHES TO SHED SUCH LIGHT AS IT MAY ON ECHEVERRIA (IN ADDITION TO ANALYSES PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED OVER THE YEARS OF ECHEVERRIA'S PROMINENCE). THE DEPARTMENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY CONSIDERING THE PROS AND CONS OF ECHEVERRIA'S CANDIDACY AS WELL AS THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVANCE PLANNING TO DETERMINE A VIABLE USG POSITION. END SUMMARY.

4. ECHEVERRIA, THE MAN: CONSIDERABLE ANALYSIS ON ECHEVERRIA EXISTS IN PREVIOUS USG BIOGRAPHIC REPORTS. COMMENTS WHICH FOLLOW ARE INTENDED TO COMPLEMENT AND, IN SOME CASES, UPDATE THAT ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF FURTHER OBSERVATION. MORE THAN ONE CLOSE OBSERVER SINCE ECHEVERRIA'S ACCESSION TO THE PRESIDENCY HAS NOTED A "TOUCH OF MEGALOMANIA" IN ECHEVERRIA AND A POSSIBLY GROWING "MESSIANIC" ASPECT TO HIS CHARACTER. THAT OBSERVATION

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PROBABLY HAS MORE VALIDITY TODAY THAN EVER. ECHEVERRIA IS POSSESSED OF ENORMOUS SELF-CONFIDENCE. HIS CAREER MUST HAVE BEEN ALMOST A STRAIGHT-LINE PROJECTION OF THE MOST GLOWING ASPIRATIONS OF HIS YOUTH, AND THE PUBLIC RECORD REVEALS NO SERIOUS SETBACKS IN HIS CAREER. REACHING THE PRESIDENCY, FOCUS OF VIRTUALLY UNLIMITED POWER IN HIGHLY CENTRALIZED MEXICAN SYSTEM -- MEXICO HAS A LONG TRADITION OF STRONG MEN IN POWER, E.G. TWO EMPERORS SINCE

MONTEZUMA, LONG "REIGN" OF PROFIRIO DIAZ -- ECHEVERRIA HAS ENHANCED AN ALREADY EXTRAORDINARY SENSE OF CONFIDENCE IN HIS OWN POWERS, PRESCIENCE, AND RIGHTNESS.

5. ECHEVERRIA EVIDENTLY DISCOUNTS OR SOMETIMES IGNORES ADVISE FROM THOSE INSTITUTIONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR COUNSELING HIM. NEITHER FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA NOR FOREIGN SECRETARIAT EXPERTS SEEM TO HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE WITH HIM. MOREOVER, ECHEVERRIA DOES NOT HESITATE TO LUMP SENIOR CABINET OFFICERS WITH THE BUREAUCRACY IN GENERAL OF WHOM HE IS FREQUENTLY CRITICAL. HE IS PROBABLY MOST RECEPTIVE TO THE VIEW OF A HANDFUL OF CLOSE ASSOCIATES WHO ARE NOT, ON A GIVEN FOREIGN POLICY OR ECONOMIC ISSUE, EXPERT OR EVEN PARTICULARLY WELL-INFORMED; THESE FEW INCLUDE HIS WIFE.

6. ECHEVERRIA IS BY NO MEANS A SELF-MADE MAN ALTHOUGH IN HIS COMMENTS ON SELECTION OF THE CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED HIM AS PRESIDENT HE HAS EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A MAN WHO HAS "COME UP THROUGH THE RANKS". HE CAME FROM A RATHER AFFLUENT MIDDLE-CLASS BACKGROUND WHICH AFFORDED HIM UNIVERSITY EDUCATION, A YEAR OF STUDY IN CHILE. WHATEVER HIS NATIVE TALENT, HE PROFITED ENORMOUSLY FROM THE TRADITIONAL MEXICAN SYSTEM OF PERSONAL PATRONAGE. ECHEVERRIA'S FATHER (RODOLFO) WAS PAYMASTER TO THE COMMANDER OF THE MEXICAN ARMED FORCES DURING REVOLUTIONARY YEARS, GENERAL RODOLFO SANCHEZ TABOADA. ONE YEAR AFTER GRADUATION FROM LAW SCHOOL, LUIS ECHEVERRIA JOINED THE STAFF OF GENERAL SANCHEZ TABOADA, THEN PRESIDENT OF THE RULING INSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRI). THIS WAS ECHEVERRIA'S BEGINNING AS A PARTY STALWART, AND HE MOVED UP TO BE DIRECTOR OF PRESS AND PROPAGANDA FOR THE PRI UNTIL 1952. IN THAT YEAR HE FOLLOWED SANCHEZ TABOADA, WHOM HE SERVED AS PRIVATE SECRETARY, TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE NAVY. WELL LAUNCHED
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BY THEN ON HIS BUREAUCRATIC CAREER, ECHEVERRIA MOVED NEXT TO THIRD-ECHELON JOB IN THE SECRETARIAT OF EDUCATION, AND IN 1958 TO THE SECRETARIAT OF GOVERNMENT (INTERIOR), TRADITIONAL STEPPING STONE TO THE PRESIDENCY.

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7. WE DO NOT QUESTION ECHEVERRIA'S SINCERITY IN SEEKING GREATER DEGREE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL MEXICANS -- WITHIN THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM -- AND HE HAS ACHIEVED SOME SUCCESS (DEGREE IS DEBATABLE) IN IMPROVING THE LOT OF MEXICAN POOR. BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT ECHEVERRIA EVER REBELLED AGAINST THE INNATE HYPOCRISY AND CORRUPTION OF THE MEXICAN SYSTEM -- ONE WHICH PRESENTS A FACADE OF "REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY" TO THE WORLD AND ITS OWN CONSTITUENCY WHILE CONSTITUTING IN FACT A SYSTEM DESIGNED OR ADAPTED TO CONCENTRATE POLITICAL POWER AND A GRASP AT WEALTH WITHIN THE HANDS OF A SMALL ESTABLISHMENT. THE SYSTEM FITS HIM LIKE A GLOVE; ECHEVERRIA OBVIOUSLY FOUND HIS TALENTS AND ASPIRATIONS SUITED TO THE MEXICAN POLITICAL WAY OF LIFE.

8. HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THINGS-AS-THEY-ARE IN MEXICO CONTRASTS SOMEWHAT WITH A PURITANICAL STREAK IN HIS PERSONALITY. HE IS MUCH GIVEN TO PREACHING AND EXHORTATION. ABSTEMIOUS AND RATHER AUSTERE, HE IS CRITICAL OF THE PERMISSIVENESS AND RELAXATION IN TRADITIONAL SOCIAL PATTERNS IN RECENT TIMES IN MOST WESTERN SOCIETIES. HE WAS NO DOUBT PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE IN 1974 FOR BARRING FROM MEXICAN TELEVISION THIRTY-ODD TELEVISION PROGRAMS IMPORTED FROM ABROAD WHICH HE FELT WERE HAMFUL TO THE MORALS OF MEXICAN YOUTH. DOES THIS PURITANISM REFLECT SCRUPULOUS PERSONAL HONESTY AND REJECTION OF CORRUPTION? THOUGH HE HAS SUBSTANTIAL HOLDINGS (SOME OF WHICH HE IS DONATING TO WORTHY CAUSES SUCH AS A THIRD WORLD UNIVERSITY), ANY EVIDENCE THAT

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ECHEVERRIA MAY HAVE PROFITED MATERIALLY FROM HIS POSITION IS LACKING. BUT ACCUSATIONS OF CORRUPTION AGAINST HIS BLOOD RELATIVES AND EVEN MORE AGAINST HIS WIFE'S RELATIVES

(SEE MEXICO A-421 OF 9/12/74) ARE RIFE. IF TEN PERCENT OF THESE STORIES ARE TRUE, SOME OF ECHEVERRIA'S FAMILY CONNECTIONS HAVE ENRICHED THEMSELVES FOR LIFE DURING HIS PRESIDENCY.

9. ECHEVERRIA'S UNFLAGGING ENERGY IS TRULY ASTOUNDING. HE SEEMS REGULARLY TO WORK 16 HOURS OR MORE PER DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR HIM TO MAKE FOUR OR FIVE PUBLIC APPEARANCES IN ONE DAY AND THE STREAM OF VIP VISITORS TO MEXICO DURING RECENT MONTHS AND THE STRAIN THIS MUST HAVE IMPOSED UPON ECHEVERRIA HAS BEEN IMPRESSIVE. HE IS AT PRESENT ON A 40-DAY, MANKILLING TOUR OF FOURTEEN COUNTRIES RANGING FROM CUBA TO INDIA. BUT THE NET ACCOMPLISHMENT OF ECHEVERRIA'S ALMOST FRENETIC ACTIVITY IS NOT SO IMPRESSIVE. AN OBJECTIVE OBSERVER CAN HARDLY ESCAPE THE EVENTUAL CONCLUSION THAT THE FLURRY OF ACTIVITY BECOMES AN END IN ITSELF JUST AS ECHEVERRIA HAS COME TO LOVE THE SHEER EXCITEMENT, COLOR, AND CHEERING CROWDS OF STATE VISITS, ALL QUESTIONS OF SUBSTANCE ASIDE. OBVIOUSLY, ECHEVERRIA IS CAPABLE OF ENDURING MORE STRESS IN TERMS OF WORKLOAD THAN MOST MEN, BUT THIS IS A SELF-IMPOSED BURDEN. NONE OF HIS PREDECESSORS OVER THE PAST TWO OR THREE DECADES HAS FOUND IT NECESSARY TO EXPEND QUITE SO MUCH ENERGY, PUT IN SO MANY HOURS ON THE JOB, MAKE SO MANY SPEECHES, OR ENGAGE IN SUCH FREQUENT TRAVEL AT HOME AND ABROAD IN ORDER TO GOVERN THIS LONG-STABLE COUNTRY.

10. HOW DOES ECHEVERRIA REACT TO SUDDEN STRESS WHICH IS NOT SELF-IMPOSED? OWING TO THE VERY STABILITY MENTIONED ABOVE, WHICH IS BASED UPON MANY FACTORS (INCLUDING A PROLONGED REVOLUTINARY PERIOD WHICH EXHAUSTED MEXICO IN MANY RESPECTS, A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WHICH IS CONTENT TO STAY OUT OF POLITICS, AND A GRADUALLY IMPROVING ECONOMIC SITUATION OVER THE YEARS), THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO CERTAINLY ENCOUNTERS FEWER SUDDEN CRISES THAN HIS COUNTERPARTS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES. SO CRISES ARE NOT A REGULAR FEATURE OF MEXICAN LIFE. BUT TWO INCIDENTS WHICH

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INEVITABLY COME TO MIND ARE THOSE INVOLVING STUDENT DISORDERS IN 1968 (WHEN ECHEVERRIA WAS SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT) AND IN 1971 WHEN HE WAS PRESIDENT. ON BOTH OCCASIONS ECHEVERRIA WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A KEY DECISION-MAKER AND HIS RESPONSE TO THE DISORDERS WAS DRASTIC AND VIOLENT. IN THE 1968 INCIDENT, FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO AS "THE MASSACRE OF TLATELOLCO", SOME 50 PEOPLE WERE KILLED BY REPRESSIVE FORCES OF THE GOVERNMENT. ONE OTHER ILLUSTRATIVE INCIDENT: IN MARCH 1975, WHEN ECHEVERRIA VISITED THE CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO FOR THE FIRST TIME DURING HIS PRESIDENCY, HE WAS ATTACKED BY STUDENT GROUPS

-- WHO HURLED INSULTS AND STONES, ONE OF WHICH HIT HIM. OBVIOUSLY UNDER STRESS, HIS RESPONSE WAS TO CHARGE HIS ASAILANTS WITH BEING "MANIPULATED BY THE CIA". (SUBSEQUENTLY, ECHEVERRIA SENT EMISSARY PRIVATELY TO AMBASSADOR

TO EXPLAIN THAT HE KNEW CIA ALLEGATION UNFOUNDED BUT THAT HE WAS DELIBERATELY ACCUSING STUDENTS OF AFFILIATION THEY

WOULD ABHOR. HE ASSERTS THAT SUCH TACTICS "STEAL THE BANNERS FROM THE LEFT", I.E. THAT THIS IS HIS METHOD OF PRE-EMPTING ISSUES FROM THE DOMESTIC LEFT. WHATEVER ELSE MAY BE SAID, HE SHOWED CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL COURAGE IN FACING AN ANGRY CROWD.)

11. PERHAPS THE SALIENT CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE FOREGOING OBSERVATIONS ARE THE FOLLOWING. ECHEVERRIA THE MAN IS AN AUTHENTIC PRODUCT OF HIS CULTURE AND SYSTEM WITH A DISCERNIBLE BENT TOWARD AUTHORITARIANISM UNDER PRESSURE. SECOND, HE IS NOT A MAN TO BE GUIDED TO A VERY GREAT EXTENT BY HIS ADVISORS, RATHER, HE HAS THE GREATEST FAITH IN HIS OWN ABILITY AND WISDOM. THIRD, HE IS NOT AT HIS BEST IN CRISIS SITUATIONS. HIS FAULT IS NOT SO MUCH TO "FLAP" AS TO STRIKE OUT VIGOROUSLY WITHOUT MUCH APPARENT REFLECTION -- MUCH AS IN THE APOCRYPHAL MILITARY DICTUM: "WHEN IN DOUBT, DO ANYTHING", I.E., DO NOT REMAIN PASSIVE.

12. ECHEVERRIA, THE STATESMAN: DESPITE ECHEVERRIA'S EXTRAORDINARILY WFS RHK#SURE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD

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SINCE HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT, HE REMAINS IN MOST WAYS RATHER PROVINCIAL AND UNSOPHISTICATED IN HIS WORLD VIEWS. PERHAPS HIS STRONGEST TENDENCIES IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ARE (1) TO OVERSIMPLIFY AND (2) TO PERSIST ONCE HE HAS EMBARKED UPON A COURSE. ECHEVERRIA TENDS TO SUPERIMPOSE THE "REVOLUTIONARY VIEWS" OF HIS MEXICAN EXPERIENCE UPON INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. WITH SOME NAIVETE, AND SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF A SECOND-GENERATION MEXICAN "REVOLUTINARY", HE SEES THAT WHICH IS "REVOLUTIONARY" AS GOOD WITHOUT LOOKING BEHIND LABELS VERY MUCH. HIS INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK ALSO EMBODIES THE QUIXOTIC STRAIN IN MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY. MEXICO CONTINUES, FOR EXAMPLE, TO RECOGNIZE THE SPANISH REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT. ECHEVERRIA FAVORS "IDEOLOGICAL PLURALISM", AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE IS AS RECEPTIVE TOWARD THE PRESENT CHILEAN GOVERNMENT AS TOWARD THE CASTRO REGIME IN CUBA.

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13. A PRODUCT OF HIS SYSTEM, ECHEVERRIA FREQUENTLY TAKES ONE STAND IN PUBLIC AND ANOTHER IN PRIVATE. THIS HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY TRUE OF HIS DEALINGS WITH THE UNITED STATES. FREQUENTLY SHARPLY CRITICAL OF THE U.S., HE NEVERTHELESS SENDS PRIVATE SIGNALS OF FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES.

14. ECHEVERRIA'S THESIS FOR HIS LICENCIATE IN LAW WAS ENTITLED "THE SYSTEM OF EQUILIBRIUM OF POWER AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS." THOUGH THIS WORK IS LARGELY A REHASH CRIBBED FROM AUTHORS ECHEVERRIA HAD CONSULTED, ONE OF HIS CONCLUSIONS IS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST: "...THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS FAILED IN CONSIDERABLE PART BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN CONVERTED INTO THE POLITICAL INSTRUMENT OF THE GREAT POWER VICTORS WHICH PURSUED AFTER 1919 THEIR SAME AMBITIONS FOR WORLD PREDOMINANCE." NO DOUBT ECHEVERRIA RETAINS THE SAME VIEW TODAY. HE HAS MADE IDENTICAL STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE UN AND THE VICTORS OF WORLD WAR II. IN EFFECT, HE DISAPPROVES OF THE PREROGATIVES AND TO SOME EXTENT THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. EARLY IN HIS PRESIDENCY, HE SOUGHT SUPPORT FOR A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT SEAT ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL FOR THE THIRD WORLD, I.E. WITH VETO POWER. HE CLEARLY CONSIDERS THE SECURITY COUNCIL A DRAG AND AN OBSTACLE UPON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. HE SEEMS TO HAVE NO APPRECIATION FOR THE MEAN-

ING OF THE PHRASE "TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY". HIS
NATIONAL EXPERIENCE HAS GIVEN HIM NO BASIS FOR DEVELOPING
AN ATTITUDE OF FOREBEARANCE TOWARD THE MINORITY.

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15. ECHEVERRIA SEES THE CRITICAL ISSUES OF OUR TIME AS
ECONOMIC IN NATURE AND HIS VIEWS ARE AT TIMES EXTREME.
HIS WIFE UNDOUBTEDLY REFLECTED HIS VIEWS WHEN SHE RECENTLY
REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES THE PHRASE, "THE CHARTER (OF ECONOMIC
RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES) OR WAR." HE BELIEVES THAT
THE MAJOR THREAT OF WAR LIES IN THE ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED POWERS.
HE PROBABLY SEES THE CHARTER AS THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF
HIS LIFE WORK AND THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION BUT WHAT HE WILL
CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR WORLDWIDE ADHERENCE TO THE CHARTER
AND ITS EVOLUTION INTO ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL LAW SO LONG
AS HE MAY PLAY A ROLE IN PUBLIC LIFE.

16. ALTHOUGH ECHEVERRIA SUPPOSEDLY SEES THE MAJOR PROBLEMS
OF OUR TIMES AS ECONOMIC, HE DOES NOT HAVE A VERY GOOD
GRASP OF THE SUBJECT. AS IN FOREIGN RELATIONS, HE APPEARS
TO BE RELYING LESS AND LESS ON THE ECONOMISTS AT THE BANK
OF MEXICO AND TREASURY THAT DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED
MEXICO'S SUCCESSFUL "GROWTH WITH STABILITY" POLICIES.
ECONOMIC DECISIONS UNDER ECHEVERRIA SHOW MORE CONCERN
FOR SHORT-RUN POLITICAL PROBLEMS THAN THE LONG-RUN ECO-
NOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE NATION. UNDER ECHEVERRIA,
INFLATION HAS BECOME A SERIOUS PROBLEM, THE BALANCE OF
PAYMENTS HAS DETERIORATED AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT HAS
STAGNATED. THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY
ALIENATED UNDER THIS REGIME. WE SUSPECT SOME OF THE
LEADING ECONOMISTS IN RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT POSITIONS
ARE SECRETLY PRAYING THAT THE ECONOMY CAN BE HELD TOGETHER
UNTIL THE END OF THIS ADMINISTRATION. CONTINUATION OF
SOME OF ECHEVERRIA'S POLICIES SUCH AS PUBLIC SECTOR SPEND-
ING IN EXCESS OF RESOURCES, HIGH WAGE INCREASES AND
DENIGRATION OF THE MIDDLE CLASS COULD LEAD TO ECONOMIC
STAGNATION A LA URUGUAY OR ARGENTINA. WHILE THERE ARE
GROUNDS TO HOPE THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN, IT IS UNLIKELY
DA
IF NH#
THE ECHEVERRIA ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC POLICIES WILL,
IN RETROSPECT, BE TO HIS CREDIT.

17. PERHAPS ECHEVERRIA, DESPITE THE IMPORTANCE HE

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ATTACHES TO ECONOMIC ISSUES, HAS OCCASIONAL DOUBTS AS TO THE LIKELY CAUSE OF FUTURE CONFLICT. IF SO, HIS "SOLUTION" IS SIMPLY A REPEATED CALL FOR TOTAL DISARMAMENT AND FOR THE USE OF RESOURCES SPENT ON ARMS BY THE GREAT POWERS IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD. HIS VIEWS ON THE DISARMAMENT OF NUCLEAR POWERS ARE, TO SAY THE LEAST, NAIVE.

18. ON THE MEXICAN NATIONAL SCENE ECHEVERRIA, DESPITE HIS VISITS TO SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND OCCASIONAL PRAISE FOR THE "SECOND WORLD'S" SUPPORT FOR HIS VIEWS, NEVERTHELESS MAINTAINS A PRIVATELY SUSPICIOUS OUTLOOK TOWARD COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. DURING HIS PRESIDENCY HE HAS NOT HESITATED TO EXPEL SOVIET DIPLOMATS AS A RESULT OF EAJ LSRH#INDIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN SUBVERSION WITHIN MEXICO. FOLLOWING HIS TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PRC, HE EXPRESSED PRIVATELY CONSIDERABLE DISTASTE FOR WHAT HE HAD SEEN OF SOCIALIST SYSTEMS.

19. ECHEVERRIA AS SECGEN: THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. OBVIOUSLY, NO ONE CAN FORESEE JUST HOW ECHEVERRIAMIGHT ACT AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN: THE RESPONSIBILITY MIGHT TRANSFORM HIM SUBSTANTIALLY. NONETHELESS, WE THINK IT WORTHWHILE TO DELINEATE CERTAIBEJLIGQI UCRDK# BASED UPON ECHEVERRIA'S BEHAVIOR IN THE PAST.

A. ECHEVERRIA WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE GUIDANCE (EDUATION) IN THE WAYS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION. DESPITE HIS PARTICIPATION IN MANY CONFERENCES (MAINLY DURING HIS PRESIDENCY), HE HAS NEVER BEEN EXPOSED TO THE MECHANICS OF MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY OTHER THAN AS AN "HONORED GUEST SPEAKER" AND HE ALMOST CERTAINLY HAS NO TRUE APPRECIATION OF THE PROCESS OF FINE-TUNING, TRADE-OFFS, AND INTRICATE COMPROMISE BY WHICH DIFFERING POSITIONS ARE RECONCILED TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE. HE UNDERSTANDS A LITTLE ENGLISH BUT HAS NO OTHER LANGUAGE THAN HIS NATIVE SPANISH.

B. AS PRESIDENT, ECHEVERRIA HAS MORE THAN ONCE
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DISCONCERTED HIS PRINCIPAL (INSTITUTIONAL) ADVISORS BY SURPRISING INITIATIVES. HE PLAYS TO A LARGE AUDIENCE AND HE IS ACCUSTOMED TO A SYSTEM WHERE ADVISORS PICK UP THE PIECES.

C. AS BETWEEN THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES AND THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, ECHEVERRIA WOULD PROBABLY STRIVE TO BE IMPARTIAL THOUGH PERSONALLY PREJUDICED IN FAVOR OF THE

FORMER. STILL, AS SELF-ANOINTED CHAMPION OF THE THIRD WORLD, ECHEVERRIA SEEMS TO FEEL SOME OBLIGATION TOWARD THE COMMUNIST STATES (FOR SUPPORT, FOR EXAMPLE, ON THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES - CERDS). AND HE MIGHT BE INCLINED TO FOLLOW HIS DOMESTIC TENDENCY OF PRE-EMPTING LEFTIST CAUSES ("STEALING THE BANNERS FROM THE LEFT").

D. AS BETWEEN THE THIRD WORLD AND ALL THE OTHER WORLDS, ECHEVERRIA WOULD FAVOR THE FORMER. TO ADOPT A RIGIDLY IMPARTIAL, NEUTRAL POSITION TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD (TO WHICH HE WOULD, IN FACT, OWE HIS SUPPORT FOR ELECTION) WOULD BE TO TURN HIS BACK ON THE ENTIRE SUM AND SUBSTANCE OF HIS SIX-YEAR CRUSADE ON BEHALF OF LDS'S. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT HE WOULD IN ANY REAL WAY DETACH HIMSELF FROM SUCH FAVORITE CAUSES AS CERDS, DISARMAMENT (AS PREACHED BY MEXICO), A RATHER VAGUE WORLD FOOD BANK PROPOSAL HE ADVANCED IN LATE 1974. IT IS SCARCELY LESS CREDIBLE THAT HE MIGHT SUDDENLY RISE ABOVE HIS ETERNAL POLEMICS AGAINST THE "RICH COUNTRIES" AS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE WORLD'S ILLS.

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R 012340Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9223

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E. ECHEVERRIA IN A CRISIS SITUATION (E.G., A FLARE-
UP IN THE MIDEAST) IS NOT QUITE PREDICTABLE. THE NATURE

OF THE MAN WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO PLAY THE
ROLE OF THE CALM, DISINTERESTED AND IMPARTIAL MEDIATOR
WITHOUT INJECTING
HIS OWN RATHER EMOTIONAL VIEWS INTO ANY
GIVEN SITUATION. HIS "CRISIS QUOTIENT", VZANSKBLOF#
REACTION TO RELATIVELY MINOR MEXICAN EVENTS, IS NOT PARTI-
CULARLY REASSURING.

F. ECHEVERRIA'S WHOLE FORMATIVE BACKGROUND HAS
NOT LED HIM TO VIEW THE U.S. DISPASSIONATELY. LIKE MOST
MEXICANS, HE HAS CERTAIN DEFENSIVE REFLEXES TOWARD THE
U.S. IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR THAT THESE REFLEXES WOULD
CEASE TO EXIST IN A NEW ROLE.

G. ON A MORE PROSAIC LEVEL, ECHEVERRIA MIGHT BE
EXPECTED TO TRAVEL WIDELY AS UN SEC GEN. HE LOVES STATE
TRAVEL, AS PRESIDENT. WOULD HE REMEMBER THAT HE WAS
WEARING A NEW HAT, OR SIMPLY TAKE UP WHERE HE HAD LEFT
OFF?

H. FINALLY, IT IS TOO SOON TO EVALUATE ECHE-
VERRIA'S SUCCESSOR AS PRESIDENT OF MEXICO, BUT THERE IS
AT LEAST A CHANCE THAT THE SUCCESSOR MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT
LESS OF AN ACTIVIST ON BEHALF OF THE THIRD WORLD. HOW-
EVER, SHOULD ECHEVERRIA BECOME SEC GEN OF THE UN, VIRTUALLY
ALL MEXICANS, INCLUDING THE NEW PRESIDENT, WOULD OUT OF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MEXICO 06867 04 OF 04 020209Z

NATIONAL PRIDE FEEL COMPELLED TO REFLECT THAT PRIDE BY
CONTINUING THE ECHEVERRIA ACTIVIST POLICIES IN INTERN-
TIONAL AFFAIRS. JOVA

NOTE BY OCT: MEXICO 6867 (SEC 4 OF 4). #AS RECEIVED. CORRECTION
TO FOLLOW.
NOT PASSED USUN
MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic DecapTIONing: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, NOMINATION, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, ELECTION CANDIDATES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1975
DecapTION Date: 28 MAY 2004
DecapTION Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchandr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MEXICO06867
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750270-1025
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750891/aaaadcai.tel
Line Count: 586
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 11
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 MEXICO 6668
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchandr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 JUN 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <16 OCT 2003 by buchandr>
Review Markings:

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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S .N. ASPIRATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PORO, MX, UN, (ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, LUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006